

Message Text

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TU, CY

SUBJECT: LUNCHEON MEETING WITH SULEYMAN DEMIREL

SUMMARY: DURING THE COURSE OF A TWO AND A HALF HOUR LUNCH SEPTEMBER 16 HOSTED BY SULEYMAN DEMIREL, CHIEF OF THE JUSTICE PARTY, FOR JOE TONER, THE USAID DIRECTOR, AND MYSELF, DEMIREL DOUBTED THE GREEKS WOULD BE WILLING TO SIT DOWN AT A CONFERENCE TABLE IN THE NEAR FUTURE WITH THE TURKS ON CYPRUS ISSUES. HE SAID HE WOULD KILL ANY POSSIBILITY OF A MINORITY GOVERNMENT AND PREFERRED NEW ELECTIONS IN THE SPRING OF 1975. SO FAR AS THE POPPY ISSUE IS CONCERNED, DEMIREL SAID THAT PARLIAMENT WILL NOT BE CONCERNED WITH HOW POPPIES ARE GROWN, AND HE SEES THE MOVE TO A STRAW PROCESS POSING NO DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

1. CYPRUS. DEMIREL TOOK A DIM VIEW OF THE TURKISH

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GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. HE SAID

THAT BY MAKING THIS A MATTER OF DOMESTIC POLITICS ECEVIT HAS LESSENED HIS ROOM FOR MANEUVER. DEMIREL SAID HE HAD ADVISED ECEVIT TO KEEP HIS OPTIONS OPEN AND KEEP THE ISSUE OUT OF THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL FRAY. HE FEELS THAT DESPITE WHAT ECEVIT HAS BEEN SAYING AT THE DIPLOMATIC LEVEL, HIS PARTY HAS BEEN TRYING TO CASH IN FOR WHATEVER POLITICAL ADVANTAGE CYPRUS OFFERS. HE IS CONCERNED OVER THE COST OF THE CYPRUS OPERATION AND REALIZES IT WILL BE A LONG TERM EXPENDITURE. HE SAID THERE IS NO ADVANTAGE TO THE GREEKS TO SIT AT A CONFERENCE TABLE UNLESS THEY ARE ABLE TO GET MORE SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS THAN ECEVIT CAN POSSIBLY GIVE THEM, GIVEN THE PUBLIC FRENZY OVER THE WAR. HE APPLAUDS THE US FOR ITS ROLE IN THE CYPRUS ISSUE AND SAID HE APPRECIATES WHAT THIS MUST HAVE COST US IN TERMS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GREECE. HE SEES THE TURKISH/US RELATIONSHIP ON A FIRM FOOTING FOR THE FUTURE AS A RESULT OF OUR ACTION ON CYPRUS. HE SEES THE CYPRUS SITUATION REASONABLY STABILIZED AS IT NOW STANDS.

2. DOMESTIC POLITICS. DEMIREL SEES THE BASIC ISSUE IN THE NEXT TURKISH ELECTION AS BEING THE ECONOMY RATHER THAN CYPRUS. HE IS CRITICAL OF THIS GOVERNMENT FOR DOING NOTHING TO CURB PRESENT ECONOMIC TRENDS AND IS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE INACTION OF NAIM TALU AS A TRANSITIONAL PRIME MINISTER FOR HIS LACK OF ACTION DESPITE THE FACT THAT DEMIREL ADMITS HAVING NAMED HIM TO THAT POST. DEMIREL DISCOUNTED THE POSSIBILITY OF A MINORITY GOVERNMENT, SAYING "I WILL KILL IT." HE THOUGHT IT WAS MORE LIKELY A COALITION WOULD BE FORMED BETWEEN THE RPP AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES. HIS STRONG PREFERENCE WAS FOR A NEW COALITION WITH ELECTIONS BEING HELD OFF UNTIL MAY 1975.

3. POPPIES. DEMIREL SEES NO PARLIAMENTARY PROBLEMS ARISING OVER THE ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MOVE FOR THE NEW STRAW PROCESS, WHICH OFFERS GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR SURVEILLANCE THAN THE OLD SYSTEM OF LANCING FOR OPIUM GUM. HE PREFERS A SYSTEM WHERE THE FARMER DOES NOT SAVE ANY SEED BUT, INSTEAD, SEED IS RETURNED TO THE FARMER FROM THE FACTORY FOR GROWING PURPOSES ONLY. DEMIREL IS SKEPTICAL THAT FARMERS REALLY LIKE THE TASTE OF COOKING OIL MADE FROM POPPY SEEDS AND SAID IN HIS JUDGMENT IT WAS POPULAR BECAUSE

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IT WAS THE ONLY THING THE FARMERS COULD AFFORD. WITH ANY ECONOMIC OPTION, HE THINKS FARMERS WILL BUY SUNFLOWER OIL, MARGERINE, OR SOME OTHER COOKING OIL RATHER THAN RELY ON POPPY SEED OIL.

4. THE ECONOMY. DEMIREL IS WORRIED ABOUT THE ECONOMY AND SAYS IF TURKISH WORKERS RETURN FROM EUROPE, IT WILL CAUSE SEVERE DOMESTIC PROBLEMS IN TURKEY. WHILE HE DOES

NOT THINK WORKERS WILL IN FACT BE RETURNED, PROBLEMS
WILL ARISE ANYWAY IF ADDITIONAL WORKERS ARE NOT PERMITTED
TO GO TO GERMANY, THUS EXASPERBATING THE UNEMPLOYMENT
PROBLEM. HE FEELS THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT HAS A VERY
LIMITED UNDERSTANDING OF ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. SAVINGS AND
INVESTMENT NOT A "PEOPLE'S SECTOR" (A FAVORITE ECEVIT SLOGAN)
ARE THE KEY.

5. COMMENT. DEMIREL APPEARED RELAXED AND CONFIDENT.
HE APPEARS NOT TO BE UNDULY CONCERNED REGARDING THE PROSPECTIVE
REVOLT IN THE FORTHCOMING JP CONVENTION AGAINST HIS RULE. HE
IS STILL READING EXTENSIVELY AND MOSTRECENTLY HAS BEEN READING
ON HARRY TRUMAN AND HIS PROBLEMS AS PRESIDENT. I THOUGHT
HE WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO INDICATE TO ME HIS INTEREST IN
RETAINING A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US AND HIS INTEREST
IN KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY IN THE MONTHS TO COME.
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